



HANDEL & HAYDN AT SYMPHONY HALL

Thomas Dunn, *Artistic Director*

168th Season, 1982-1983

Thursday, February 17, 1983 at 8 p.m.

Saturday, February 19, 1983 at 8 p.m.

Gerald Tarack, *violin*

Thomas Dunn, *conducting*

BRAHMS *Serenade No. 2 in A Major, Op. 16*
Allegro moderato
Scherzo
Adagio non troppo
Quasi Menuetto
Rondo

WAGNER *A Siegfried Idyll*

Intermission

MOZART *The Haffner Serenade, K. 250*
Allegro maestoso — Allegro molto
Andante
Menuetto
Rondo
Menuetto galante
Andante
Menuetto
Adagio — Allegro assai
Mr. Tarack

The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment
are not allowed in this hall.

Next Concert: March 16 and 17, 1983 — *Keyboard Extravaganza*
Thomas Dunn, conducting

NOTES

by Joseph Dyer

Balmy moonlit nights, fragrant gardens, the strumming of guitars and the ardent song of a lover beneath his lady's balcony are images which embody the popular notion of a "serenade." The vocal serenade, both solo and ensemble, was cultivated during the Renaissance, but its purpose was never strictly amorous. It often served as a token of homage offered to an important civic official or honored guest. The instrumental serenade of the late eighteenth century carried on the festive traditions of the serenade and also preserved the link with leafy arbors stirred by warm nocturnal breezes.

The Serenade in D (K. 250) graced the wedding of Marie Elisabeth Haffner to the merchant Franz Xaver Spaeth from the Tyrol. The father of the bride had been mayor of Salzburg; hence the wedding must have been a distinguished social occasion. It was in Mozart's own interest to contribute his best, and clearly he did. The jubilant strains of the "Haffner" Serenade sounded for the first time on July 21, 1776 in the garden of the family's summer house in the Loretogasse (now Paris-Lodron-Strasse). Mozart maintained his ties with the Haffner family even after he took up residence in Vienna. When the brother of the bride, Sigismund Haffner the younger, was raised to the nobility in 1782, Mozart was again asked for a serenade. That work, reduced to four movements, became the "Haffner" Symphony (K. 385). Mozart also rearranged K. 250 as a symphony, reorchestrating one of the minuet trios and adding a tympani part, but the symphonic version has not replaced the original serenade featured on this evening's program.

When Johannes Brahms was only twenty years old, Robert Schumann announced with much fanfare the arrival of a new genius on the German musical scene. After such an introduction much was expected of him, specifically symphonic and vocal music on a grand scale. Brahms possessed discretion as well as a sense of mission, however, and he avoided for the moment what might have been regarded as a direct challenge to the Classic tradition which culminated in Beethoven. Only after the two serenades, Op. 11 and 16, the *German Requiem* and the Haydn Variations did he penetrate the domain of the symphony proper.

Both serenades were written between 1857 and 1859, while Brahms served the court of Lippe-Detmold as chorus conductor and chamber musician. Prince Leopold supported a large musical establishment including a 45-piece orchestra which performed the music of Berlioz and Wagner. The wind players in the orchestra were particularly fine, and Brahms familiarized himself with most of the repertoire for piano and winds. He would also have heard the septets of Beethoven and Hummel, the octets of Schubert and Spohr, and of course the three great wind serenades of Mozart.

Against the background of these musical experiences, Brahms wrote the First Serenade, an uncomfortable compromise between the symphony and the less serious serenade-divertimento. With the Second Serenade he achieved a work which is more confident and more assured about its direction and tone. The number and order of movements — an initial Allegro, two

minuets flanking a slow movement, a rondo finale — resemble that of a typical Austrian divertimento, though Brahms may have had in mind Mozart's E-flat Serenade K. 375 as his model. The pronounced woodwind coloration of Serenade No. 2 (supported only by viola, cello and bass) is traditional for entertainment music of the Classic era and not a Brahmsian experiment, as sometimes implied. Coincidentally, the restriction to the lower strings creates a displacement of orchestral weight which we recognize as characteristic of the mature Brahms.

* * *

A Siegfried Idyll, although most recent in date of composition among the works on tonight's program, returns to the original gratulatory function of the serenade. It is a single-movement work, 'rich in the "simple, flowing melodies"' specified as proper to the serenade by one eighteenth-century writer. Wagner wrote the lovely *Idyll* as a birthday offering for his wife Cosima in 1870 when they were living in a villa — Tribschen — on the shore of Lake Lucerne.

Wagner worked on the *Idyll* in secret in order to surprise Cosima with a morning serenade on her birthday, which also happened to be Christmas day. He assembled his small orchestra on the staircase leading to her room. The gentle tones of the *Idyll* floated upward, to the great delight of Cosima, who recorded the scene in her diary:

Concerning this day, my children, I can tell you nothing, nothing of my feelings, nothing of my mood — nothing nothing. I will just tell you simply and directly what happened. As I awoke, I perceived a sound; it grew gradually louder. I could not imagine myself still dreaming. Music sounded forth — and what music! As it died away, Richard and the five children came in and presented me with the score of the "Symphonic Birthday Greeting." I was in tears, but so was everyone else. Richard had . . . thus consecrated our Tribschen forever.

Cosima cites the subtitle. On the title page Wagner had written "Tribschen Idyll with Fidi Birdsong and Orange Sunrise as Symphonic Birthday Greeting to his Cosima from her Richard."

Because of its intimate domestic connotations, Wagner withheld the score from publication for many years. When he did consent to having the *Idyll* printed, it bore the title by which it is known today. To the score he prefixed a pompous set of verses including the lines:

For him and thee must I now in tones give thanks;
What fairer form could recompense for love-gifts take?
— an allusion to the birth of their son Siegfried (1869-1930), who thus shared in what was originally an affectionate tribute addressed to Cosima alone.

The themes of *A Siegfried Idyll* are familiar from the last act of *Siegfried*: the ecstatic awakening of passion between Siegfried and Brünnhilde, a veiled allusion to the relationship between Richard and Cosima. Wagner's treatment of the motives is consistently lyrical; it differs entirely from that found in the opera. In the beautifully sustained mood of the *Idyll* one recognizes sentiments of contentment and affection associated with an intimate charm unique in Wagner's music.

Thomas Dunn

Artistic Director Thomas Dunn has demonstrated that a conductor who releases a pack of beagles on the stage of Carnegie Hall can also win acclaim as a leading interpreter of the world's great music. Whether he performs the Leopold Mozart *Hunting Symphony* (hence the hounds!) or one of the Bach Passions, Mr. Dunn's reputation rests on the personal and intensely musical involvement he brings to every work.

Never typed as a limited specialist in any repertoire, he has performed opera, ballet, puppet theater and an astonishing range of music for instrumental and vocal ensembles. If he has any specialty, it is a commitment to bringing the profound, the entertaining, and always the beautiful to audiences in Boston or wherever he conducts in the United States.

Thomas Dunn came to the Handel & Haydn Society in 1967 after many years as founder-conductor of the Festival Orchestra of New York. He brought to Boston a completely new style of programming together with an insistence on the highest performance standards. His historical versions of *Messiah* gave a fresh dimension to an established Handel & Haydn tradition and, under his leadership, the Society reclaimed its position as a vital force on the Boston musical scene. Mr. Dunn also holds the position of Director of Choral Activities at Boston University.

Gerald Tarack

Concertmaster

Gerald Tarack has created for himself the unusual career of a professional freelance concertmaster. Avowing disenchantment with the "Big Band" sound, he has turned down permanent positions with major orchestras in favor of varied and more stimulating music making with smaller ensembles. He directs the Tarack Chamber Ensemble, a group of fifteen musicians who perform without a conductor, and also manages in his hectic schedule to alternate chamber orchestra engagements with dates in the pop recording studio. His unique talents are in such demand that bookings often stretch out a year in advance. He performs regularly with the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, Clarion Concerts and the Bach Aria Group.

Concert tours have taken Mr. Tarack to Europe, the Far East and the Soviet Union. He has recorded the Hindemith unaccompanied Sonata (Nonesuch), Sonatas of Ravel and Poulenc (*Sine Qua Non*) and the music of Schubert (Vanguard), as well as a disc with the Modern Jazz Quartet.

ORCHESTRA

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Elinor Preble

Seta Der Hohannesian

Oboe

Peggy Pearson

Barbara Knapp

Clarinet

Thomas Hill

Ian Greitzer

Bassoon

Ronald Haroutunian

Judith Bedford

Horn

David Hoose

Jean Rife

Trumpet

Jesse Levine

Thomas Cook

Violin I

Gerald Tarack, *concertmaster*

Valeria Kuchment

Mowry Pearson

Karen Van Sant

Mark Beaulieu

Violin II

Wilma Smith

Robert Riggs

Martha Edwards

David Jacobson

Viola

Endel Kalam

Scott Woolweaver

Paul Cortese

Violoncello

Bruce Coppock

Ronald Thomas

Rhonda Rider

Karen Kaderavek

Contrabass

Timothy Pitts

Robert Caplin

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